

REMARKS

In the Office Action dated May 20, 2005, claims 14-26, 34-55 and 59-73 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 1,749,421 to Donnellan in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,059,122 to Kinoshita and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,193,598 to Tsuchida. Claims 56 and 58 were rejected as being unpatentable over Donnellan in view of U.S. Patent No. 1,346,457 to Leja and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 6,165,064 to Aurelius et al. (Aurelius). Claim 57 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Donnellan in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,902,178 to Perkitny.

The Examiner is thanked for the courtesy of providing an interview to applicant's attorney on July 20, 2005. Applicant's attorney was present in person. The president of the assignee of the instant application, William Knox, attended by telephone. During the interview, many of the prior art references were discussed. These included Donnellan, Kinoshita and Leja, as well as two Perkitny patents, U.S. Patent Nos. 5,902,178 and 5,827,117. In addition, a physical embodiment of the coin separator and sorter assembly was displayed to the Examiner and was discussed in connection with the separation and sorting of U.S. coins.

In the remarks, applicant will discuss each set of claims separately.

Claim 14 and its Dependent Claims 15-18

As discussed during the interview, even the three-way combination of Donnellan, Kinoshita and Tsuchida neither teaches nor discloses a coin separating and sorting assembly such as is recited in claim 14. More particularly, claim 14 recites a separating wheel and a wheel housing on which the separating wheel is supported. First and second coin support surfaces are provided on the wheel housing, wherein the second

coin support surface is oriented approximately perpendicular to the first coin support surface. As discussed at length in the Fourth Amendment dated February 11, 2005 on page 19, the claimed invention is illustrated in Figure 13 of the instant application's drawings.

As discussed during the interview, in all of Donnellan, Kinoshita and Tsuchida, the two coin support surfaces are provided, respectively, by the wheel housing and the separating wheel. None of these references disclose both coin support surfaces being located on the wheel housing. In addition, there is no teaching or disclosure of such a structure in any of the remaining cited art. Additional language was added to more clearly define over the cited art. Accordingly, claim 14 is in condition for allowance over the art of record.

Dependent claims 15-18 merely further patentably define the detailed subject matter of their parent claim, or each other. As such, these claims are also believed to be in condition for allowance over the art of record.

Claim 19 and its Dependent Claims 20-22

As with claim 14, it is respectfully submitted that claim 19, which recites that both coin support surfaces are located on the wheel housing, patentably defines over the applied combination of Donnellan, Kinoshita and Tsuchida, as well as the remainder of the cited art.

Dependent claims 20-22 merely further patentably define the detailed subject matter of their parent claim, or each other. Therefore, these claims are also believed to be in condition for allowance over the art of record.

Claim 23 and its Dependent Claims 24-26

As with independent claims 14 and 19, it is respectfully submitted that the

applied three way combination of Donnellan, Kinoshita and Tsuchida neither teaches nor discloses the subject matter recited in claim 23. It recites that both coin support surfaces are located on the wheel housing. Accordingly, this claim patentably defines over the asserted three way combination, as well as the remainder of the cited art.

Dependent claims 24-26 merely further patentably define the detailed subject matter of their parent claim. As such, these claims are also believed to be in condition for allowance over the art of record.

Claim 34 and its Dependent Claims 35-41

This claim recites a stationary coin support surface provided on a housing and a stationary coin rolling surface, also provided on the housing. It is respectfully submitted that there is no teaching or disclosure of such a coin separating and sorting assembly in the applied combination of Donnellan, Kinoshita and Tsuchida -- as was discussed during the interview. Nor is that teaching found in any of the cited art. Accordingly, claim 34 patentably defines over all of the cited art.

Dependent claims 35-41 merely further patentably define the detailed subject matter of their parent claim, or each other. As such, these claims are also believed to be in condition for allowance over the art of record.

Claim 42 and its Dependent Claims 43-46

Independent claim 42 recites a coin bank comprising a coin hopper and a coin separating and sorting assembly comprising a separating plate and a housing, on which the separating plate is moveably mounted. The separating plate includes a plurality of coin receiving apertures, each having an identical shape and having a substantially constant diameter, along with a toroidal flange, of one piece with and extending away from a plane of the separating plate. Each of the coin receiving apertures of the

separating plate will, at some point, overlie each of four coin sorting apertures on the housing. Each associated coin meant to be sorted drops from a respective coin receiving aperture into an appropriately sized one of the four coin sorting apertures. Also, each coin meant to be sorted moves towards an axis of rotation of the separating plate prior to each coin receiving aperture overlying a first of the four coin sorting apertures.

As discussed at length on pages 24-26 of the Fourth Amendment (dated February 11, 2005), even the combination of Donnellan, Kinoshita and Tsuchida neither teaches nor discloses the subject matter recited in claim 42. Accordingly, claim 42 patentably defines over the asserted combination of references, as well as the remainder of the cited art.

Similarly, dependent claims 43-46, which merely further patentably define the detailed subject matter of their parent claim or each other, are also in condition for allowance.

Claim 47 and its Dependent Claims 48-55

As discussed during the interview, the subject matter of claim 47 pertains to a ring-shaped separating wheel and a wheel housing on which the separating wheel is supported. It was noted during the interview that none of the applied references to Donnellan, Kinoshita or Tsuchida teach or disclose a ring-shaped separating wheel. Rather, all of these references disclose a separating plate having a central pivot axis and a stem located thereat for pivoting the separating plate. In fact, there is no teaching or disclosure of such a ring-shaped separating wheel in any of the cited art. Therefore, claim 47 is in condition for allowance over the art of record.

Moreover, dependent claims 48-55, which merely further patentably define the

detailed subject matter of their parent claim, or each other, are also in condition for allowance over the art of record.

Claim 59 and its Dependent Claims 60-64

As discussed during the interview, claim 59 recites a coin separating and sorting assembly comprising a separating wheel, including at least one coin receiving aperture and a wheel housing, on which the separating wheel is supported. The wheel housing includes a first portion located in a first plane, the first portion being approximately ring-shaped and including at least one coin sorting aperture. The second portion is located in a second plane, which is spaced from the first plane. The second portion is encircled by the first portion. As discussed at length on page 30 of the Fourth Amendment, it is respectfully submitted that there is no teaching or disclosure of such an assembly in the applied art or, indeed, in any of the remaining cited art. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 59 patentably defines over all of the cited art.

Dependent claims 60-64, which merely further patentably define the detailed subject matter of their parent claim, or each other, are also in condition for allowance over the art of record.

Claim 65 and its Dependent Claims 66-69

For the reasons outlined in detail above with regard to claim 42, it is respectfully submitted that claim 65 also patentably defines over the art of record and is in condition for allowance.

Dependent claims 66-69 merely further patentably define the detailed subject matter of claim 65 or each other and are, thus, also believed to be in condition for allowance over the art of record.

Claim 70 and its Dependent Claims 71-73

It is respectfully submitted that claim 70 is in condition for allowance over the art of record for the same reason as advanced with regard to claim 47.

Dependent claims 71-73 merely further patentably define the detailed subject matter of their parent claim. As such, it is respectfully submitted that these claims are also in condition for allowance over the art of record.

Claim 56

This claim was rejected as being unpatentable over Donnellan in view of Leja and in further view of Aurelius. It was stated in the Office Action that Donnellan discloses a coin separating and sorting assembly and coin receptacles. Leja was said to disclose a drawer with coin receptacles into which sorted coins are placed after sorting. Aurelius was said to disclose the use of coin tubes used to capture coins. It was stated that at the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to have used a drawer with coin receptacles in place of the Donnellan receptacles.

However, claim 56 now recites that at least one of the plurality of coin sorting apertures includes a tapered wall. One such tapered wall is illustrated in Figure 4 of the instant application. It is identified by the numeral 120. Other, similar tapered walls can also be seen in the wheel housing 60 illustrated in Figure 4. These walls are advantageous in reorienting a coin from the plane of the wheel housing to the plane of the coin slide 64 located beneath the wheel housing (see, e.g., Figure 9 and Figure 1C of the instant application).

There is no teaching or disclosure in even the applied combination of Donnellan, Aurelius and Leja of the subject matter now recited in claim 56.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claim 56 is also in condition for allowance over applied combination of references, as well as the remainder of the art of record. Such allowance is earnestly solicited.

Claim 57

Independent claim 57 was rejected as being unpatentable over Donnellan in view of Perkitny '178. It was stated that Perkitny discloses a plurality of coin tubes in communication with apertures, the tubes being disposed at an angle with respect to a horizontal plane. Claim 57 has been amended to recite that the plurality of coin tubes is held in a drawer that is slidably mounted to the housing. It is respectfully submitted that even the applied combination of references neither teaches nor discloses a coin bank in which the coin tubes are held in a drawer which is slidably in relation to the housing in which the separating and sorting assembly is held, as recited in claim 57. It is evident that the drawer 30 is slideable in relation to the housing 10, 14 and that the coin tubes 36 are removable from the drawer.

It is respectfully submitted that there is no teaching or disclosure of the subject matter of claim 57 in the applied combination of Donnellan and Perkitny '178.

Moreover, there is no teaching or disclosure of the coin bank recited in claim 57 in the remainder of the cited art either. Accordingly, this claim is also believed to be in condition for allowance over the art of record.

Claim 58

This claim was rejected as being unpatentable over Donnellan in view of Leja and Aurelius. However, it is respectfully submitted that even the applied three way combination neither teaches nor discloses a coin bank in which the plurality of coin tubes is oriented approximately perpendicular to a plane of the wheel housing coin

sorting face. That face is oriented at an acute angle to a horizontal plane. As such, claim 58 patentably defines over the applied combination of references, as well as the remainder of the cited art.

In view of the foregoing, allowance of all pending claims is respectfully requested,

Respectfully submitted,

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